

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-3, 6, 7, 9-15, 17-21, 23-25, 27-29 and 61, 62, and 64-68 are pending. Claims 10-12, 27-29 and 65-66 are withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1, 21, 61, 62 and 67 are amended. Support for the amendments may be found in Fig. 19 as well as elsewhere in the Specification.

Claims 1-3, 6-9, 13-15, 17-21, 24-26, 61, 62, 64 and 67-68 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker '163, in view of Shulman, both of record. This rejection is respectfully traversed. There is no reference or passage cited by the examiner that teaches that a gaming unit selected by a player is first configured for playing in a tournament when a tournament is in progress and, after an identifier is received of the player, and remaining playing time determined, the gaming machine is enabled to play in a tournament thereby allowing a player to use the gaming units to join the tournament in progress for a time period. Neither Walker nor Shulman discloses a determining of a time duration that the player may play in the time remaining in a tournament based on an identifier. In Walker there is no tournament in progress. The player decides how much time he wants to play on the slot machine by inserting the proper amount of money. There is no determination made of how long he can play with respect to a time a tournament is in progress. In Shulman, there is no machine, server, or system that determines how long the poker game will be in progress, determines the amount of time the player may participate or keeps track of the time in which he is permitted to participate by a timer. In Shulman, the player enters and exits the poker game at his own choosing and plays for an amount of time at his own choosing, unlimited by any time determinations tracked on a timer that limits his playing time. Accordingly, it is submitted that the combination of Walker and Shulman as suggested by the examiner would not arrive at the present invention. The combination of teachings does not teach the timed entry of a tournament in progress or the enablement of a gaming machine to enter a tournament in progress in a time limited way in accordance with the present claims.

Accordingly, it is submitted that the invention would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the gaming art at the time the invention was made over the teachings of Walker and Shulman.

For the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that the claims are unobvious over the combination of references and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 62 and 64 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Walker '163 in view of Shulman and Walker '173. The examiner adds Walker '173 as showing the configuration of certain gaming machines according to the player's preferences once the player's identification is authenticated. Not included in such preferences are entry into a tournament, the time remaining in which a player may participate and enablement of the gaming machine for the duration of the tournament for which the player is authorized. Walker '173 applies to downloading for games that have not yet been initiated by the player. There is no suggestion that downloading can occur while any game is in progress. Furthermore, Walker '173 does not remedy the deficiencies discussed above with respect to Walker '163 and Shulman. The invention would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the gaming art at the time the invention was made over a combination of Walker '173 with Walker '163 and Shulman. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Based on the foregoing, it is submitted that the claims are patentable over the cited art of record. Additional limitations recited in the independent claims or the dependent claims are not further discussed because the limitations discussed above are sufficient to distinguish the claimed invention from the cited art. Accordingly, applicants believe that all pending claims are allowable.

Applicants hereby petition for any additional extension of time which may be required to maintain the pendency of this case, and any required fee for such extension or any further fee required in connection with the filing of this submission is to be charged to

Deposit Account No. 504480 (Order No. IGT1P280). Should the examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,

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